



Primary School  
Curriculum

Curaclam na  
Bunscoile

# Visual Arts

Arts Education

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Design Consultancy:	Bradley McGurk Partnership
Designed by:	The Identity Business
Typesetting:	Spectrum Print Management
Printed by:	Mozzon Giuntina - Florence and Officine Grafiche De Agostini - Novara



# Visual Arts

Arts Education

Curriculum

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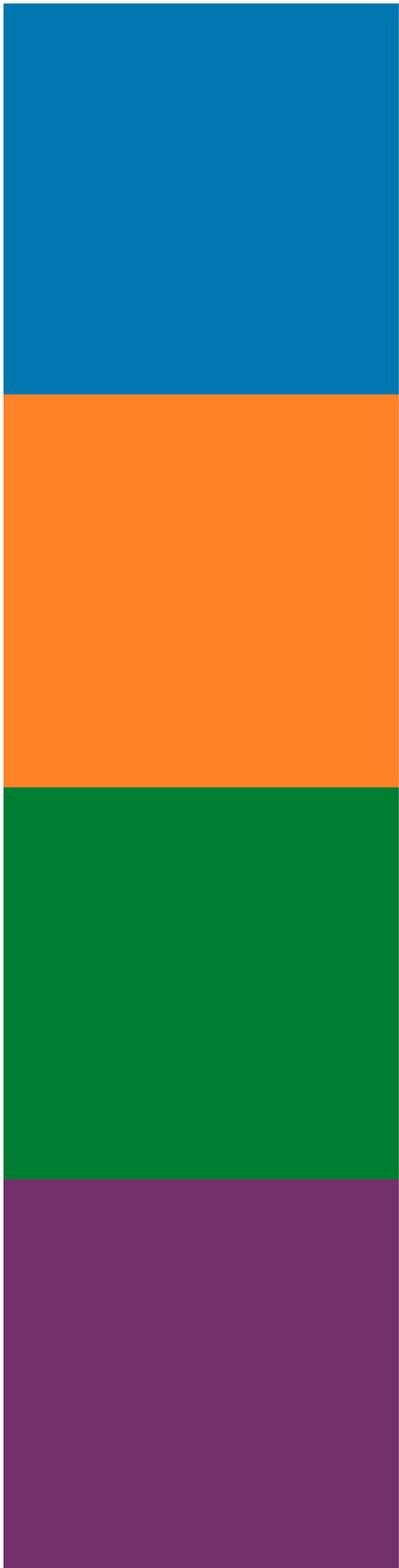
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# Introduction



# Arts education

The arts are organised expressions of ideas, feelings and experiences in images, in music, in language, in gesture and in movement. They provide for sensory, emotional, intellectual and creative enrichment and contribute to the child's holistic development. Much of what is finest in society is developed through a variety of art forms which contribute to cultural ethos and to a sense of well-being.

Arts education enables the child to explore alternative ways of communicating with others. It encourages ideas that are personal and inventive and makes a vital contribution to the development of a range of intelligences. A purposeful arts education at primary level is life-enhancing and is invaluable in stimulating creative thinking and in promoting capability and adaptability. It emphasises the creative process and so ensures that the child's work is personal and has quality. Attempts at artistic expression are valued, self-esteem is enhanced, spontaneity and risk-taking are encouraged and difference is celebrated. It is this affirming aspect of the creative arts that makes participation such a positive experience. Arts education is integral to primary education in helping to promote thinking, imagination and sensitivity, and arts activities can be a focus for social and cultural development and enjoyment in school.

Arts education encompasses a range of activities in the visual arts, in music, in drama, in dance and in literature. These activities and experiences help the child to make sense of the world; to question, to speculate and to find solutions; to deal with feelings and to respond to creative experience.

## The arts education curriculum

The arts education curriculum provides for a balance between expression and the child's need to experience and respond to the visual arts, to music and to drama. Dance is outlined within the physical education curriculum, and the contribution that literature makes to the emotional and imaginative development of the child is described within the language curricula.

The visual arts curriculum comprises interrelated activities in *making art* and in *looking at and responding to art*. It presents a range of activities in perceiving, exploring, responding to and appreciating the visual world. Perceiving involves looking with awareness and understanding of the visual elements and their interplay in the environment and in art works.

This awareness is fundamental to the development of visual expression and to the child's personal response to creative experience. Making art involves two and three-dimensional work in a range of media.

Appreciating promotes understanding of the inherent qualities in art works and aesthetic enjoyment. In developing the programme, the expressive or making activities are balanced with opportunities to see and to make a personal response to visual art forms of different styles, periods and cultures. Regional craft traditions and their modern developments, as part of the national heritage, are among those art forms.

The music curriculum comprises *listening and responding, performing and composing* activities. Focused listening is emphasised, both for its sheer enjoyment potential and for its essential role in composing and performing. The child is encouraged to listen with attention to sounds in the environment and gradually to become aware of how sound is organised in music. Performance incorporates a balance of singing and instrumental playing of his/her own work and the work of others. Ways of using sound are explored in composing, both with the voice and with a widening range of musical instruments. In developing the programme, performance is balanced with opportunities to hear and to make a personal response to music of different styles, periods and cultures, including the national repertoire in its varied national and regional forms. Interrelated activities for listening, performing and composing are suggested in the curriculum content.

The drama curriculum comprises interrelated activities which *explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding*. It explores themes and issues, creates a safe context in which to do so, and provides for opportunities to reflect on the insights gained in the process. It draws on the knowledge, interests and enthusiasms of the child. In drama, the child explores the motivations and the relationships between people that exist in a real, imagined or historical context, to help him/her understand the world. The child is encouraged to make decisions and to take responsibility for those decisions within the safe context of the drama.

Dance provides the child with opportunities to organise and develop his/her natural enjoyment of expressive movement in dance form. Through dance, the child is encouraged to explore and experiment with a variety of body movements and to communicate a range of moods and feelings. The dance programme comprises activities in the exploration, creation and performance of dance and in developing understanding of dance forms.

Through literature, the child is guided to explore the world of the imagination and to discover how language brings it to life. Expressive language, both oral and written, is fostered for its enjoyment value and to help develop aesthetic awareness.

## Aims

The aims of arts education are

- to enable the child to explore, clarify and express ideas, feelings and experiences through a range of arts activities
- to provide for aesthetic experiences and to develop aesthetic awareness in the visual arts, in music, in drama, in dance and in literature
- to develop the child's awareness of, sensitivity to and enjoyment of visual, aural, tactile and spatial qualities in the environment
- to enable the child to develop natural abilities and potential, to acquire techniques, and to practise the skills necessary for creative expression and for joyful participation in different art forms
- to enable the child to see and to solve problems creatively through imaginative thinking and so encourage individuality and enterprise
- to value the child's confidence and self-esteem through valuing self-expression
- to foster a sense of excellence in and appreciation of the arts in local, regional, national and global contexts, both past and present
- to foster a critical appreciation of the arts for personal fulfilment and enjoyment.

# The visual arts

Art is a way of making and communicating meaning through imagery. It is a unique symbolic domain and is a discipline with its own particular demands and core of learning. Art is a natural and enjoyable way of extending and enriching the child's experience of the world.

Visual arts activities enable the child to make connections between the imaginative life and the world and to organise and express ideas, feelings and experiences in visual, tangible form. In drawing, painting, constructing and inventing, the child assimilates and responds to experience and tries to make sense of it.

Visual arts education provides for creative and aesthetic experiences through exploring, investigating, experimenting, inventing, designing and making in a range of media. It promotes observation and ways of seeing and helps the child to acquire sensitivity to the visual, spatial and tactile world and to aesthetic experience. Visual arts education channels the child's natural curiosity for educational ends: the development of perceptual awareness helps the child to enjoy and interpret the visual environment and art works and can facilitate learning in all areas of the curriculum. Creative achievements in art contribute to a sense of personal identity and self-esteem and help to create cultural awareness and empathy.

## The visual arts curriculum

The curriculum suggests the following as accessible media for expression through which the child can explore, respond to and interpret the world visually:

- *Drawing*
- *Paint and colour*
- *Print*
- *Clay*
- *Construction*
- *Fabric and fibre.*

### *Drawing*

Drawing is an instinctive way for the child to communicate understanding, feelings and his/her imaginative life. The developing child quite naturally invents symbols to represent the human figure, animals and a variety of observed objects. Later, the need to progress beyond repeated symbols and to express a growing sense of individuality becomes apparent. Developing the ability to look with curiosity and concentration at qualities of line, rhythm, texture and colour and tone in the child's surroundings and in the work of artists is essential to developing drawing potential and enjoyment. Drawing has particular importance in the curriculum.

### *Paint and colour*

Paint is an ideal medium for developing the child's sensitivity to colour, because it is fluid and its effects are immediate. It is important to explore the expressive and descriptive effects of a variety of colour media and to encourage adventurous use. Colour awareness promotes sensitivity to and enjoyment of colour in the child's surroundings and is further enhanced when the child has opportunities to look at the work of artists.

### *Print*

Print-making extends the child's range of expression. Print-making activities provide additional opportunities for developing awareness of the interrelationships between shapes and colours and the impact they can have, and for experimenting with pattern. They also draw attention to the use of print in everyday objects and help to expand understanding of the image-making processes in evidence in the child's surroundings.

### *Clay*

Clay is a versatile medium for free imaginative expression. Children begin to understand its inherent possibilities for three-dimensional expression as they model with it and change it. The plastic, malleable nature of clay makes it an ideal medium for learning about form. Every child should have opportunities to see and if possible to handle or touch craft pottery and sculpture.

Papier mâché is also an accessible medium for expressing ideas in three-dimensional form. It complements work in clay and is an additional way of exploring form, particularly useful on a large scale.

### *Construction*

Construction activities with a variety of three-dimensional materials can help the child to become more spatially aware, can encourage inventiveness and can help to promote sensitivity to structure in the immediate and wider environments. The child can draw inspiration from a range of sources, which would include everyday household items, street furniture, local architecture and public sculpture.

### *Fabric and fibre*

Fabric and fibre are adaptable and enjoyable media for creativity and are materials in which the child can explore, invent and design at all levels. Their structures, textures, patterns and colours can inspire ideas and present opportunities for creative expression. They can also be used to reinforce understanding of colour and tone, shape, texture, pattern and rhythm. As the child gains confidence in handling the materials, they can be used in more complex ways. Their use can also give the child insights into traditional crafts and contemporary design, including fashion.

### *Complementary media*

The strands outlined above may be complemented by work in other media, such as photography, film and video or computer graphics, but a balance should be maintained between activities in two and three-dimensional media.

## The visual elements

The visual arts activities suggested for the different media help to develop sensitivity to qualities of line, shape, form, colour and tone, texture, pattern and rhythm and spatial organisation, and enable the child to use them purposefully. These qualities are both the elements of the visual world and the language of artistic communication, and attention should be drawn to them *informally* and *in context* throughout primary schooling. The terms ‘visual elements’ and ‘elements of art’ are used interchangeably. Terms that may be unfamiliar are explained in the glossary.

## Linkage and integration

Integrated learning is an important aspect of primary education. Well-planned, integrated topics provide a variety of contexts for developing concepts and skills and are added opportunities for creativity and inventiveness. They would include visual arts activities that incorporate a number of media (*linkage*), as well as cross-curricular activities. In the latter, different subject areas interact with rather than subsume each other and their objectives are clearly defined (*integration*). Suggested activities for linkage and integration are indicated at the end of each strand. A balance should be maintained, however, between integrated and single-subject teaching, especially in senior classes.

## Language and visual arts education

Language is such a universal influence in the teaching and learning process, in every curriculum area, that particular exemplars of its integration with visual arts education are not given in the curriculum. Language is a way for the child to name and classify things, to express and modify ideas, to formulate questions and hypotheses, to enunciate conclusions and judgements, to access and retrieve information and through language development, he/she acquires a vocabulary with which to perform these tasks. In this way, language helps to clarify ideas and expand the child's conceptual framework. In visual arts education, language is vitally important in stimulating ideas and recalling experiences so that they are vividly present as he/she tries to express them visually. Being able to talk about art is also an essential part of the child's development in art. It should therefore be a consistent concern in planning and implementing the visual arts programme.

## Assessment

Assessment, as in other areas of the curriculum, is an integral part of teaching and learning in the visual arts. The section on assessment outlines how a range of assessment techniques can enrich the learning experience of the child and provide useful information for teachers, parents and others.

## Information and communication technologies

Information and communication technologies can be used to broaden and enhance the child's understanding and experience of art. Computer art programs that are soundly based on the principles of visual arts education offer additional supportive means of expression, communication and design. CD-ROMs produced by some museums and galleries provide for interactive exploration of their collections and are particularly useful, and some collections can be accessed on the internet. Schools can set up their own web sites and through them can share information about their art activities with other schools. They can also communicate by e-mail.

## Aims

The aims of the visual arts curriculum are

- to help the child develop sensitivity to the visual, spatial and tactile world, and to provide for aesthetic experience
- to help the child express ideas, feelings and experiences in visual and tactile forms
- to enable the child to have enjoyable and purposeful experiences of different art media and to have opportunities to explore, experiment, imagine, design, invent and communicate with different art materials
- to promote the child's understanding of and personal response to the creative processes involved in making two and three-dimensional art
- to enable the child to develop the skills and techniques necessary for expression, inventiveness and individuality
- to enable the child to experience the excitement and fulfilment of creativity and the achievement of potential through art activities
- to foster sensitivity towards and enjoyment and appreciation of the visual arts
- to provide opportunities for the child to explore how the work of artists and craftspeople might relate to his/her own work.

## Broad objectives

When due account is taken of intrinsic abilities and varying circumstances, the visual arts curriculum should enable the child to

- look at, enjoy and make a personal response to a range of familiar and unfamiliar objects and images in the environment, focusing on their visual attributes
- explore and begin to develop sensitivity to qualities of line, shape, colour and tone, texture, pattern and rhythm, spatial organisation and the three-dimensional quality of form
- express ideas, feelings and experiences in visual form and with imagination, enjoyment and a sense of fulfilment
- experiment in spontaneous, imaginative and increasingly structured ways with a range of art materials, including pencils, paints, crayons, chalks, markers, inks, clay, papier mâché, fabric and fibre, and construction materials
- explore the expressive and design possibilities of the materials within a range of two and three-dimensional media, including drawing, paint and colour, print, clay, construction, fabric and fibre
- apply skills and techniques, demonstrating increasing sensitivity to the visual elements in his/her art work
- look with curiosity and openness at the work of a wide range of artists and craftspeople
- explore atmosphere, content and impact in the work of artists, especially when they relate to his/her own work
- identify a variety of visual arts media and describe some of the creative processes involved
- develop an ability to identify and discuss what he/she considers the most important design elements of individual pieces, especially when they relate to work in hand

- discuss the preferred design elements in his/her work and in the work of classmates
- begin to appreciate the context in which great art and artefacts are created and the culture from which they grow
- respond to visual arts experiences in a variety of imaginative ways
- use appropriate language in responding to visual arts experiences.

# Infant classes

# Overview

infant classes

## *Concepts and skills development*

---

### Concepts

- An awareness of line
- An awareness of shape
- An awareness of form
- An awareness of colour and tone
- An awareness of texture
- An awareness of pattern and rhythm
- An awareness of space

*The concepts above and related skills are derived from the visual elements and will be developed as work is completed on the strands and strand units outlined below.*

---

### *Strands*

#### Drawing

- Making drawings
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Paint and colour

- Painting
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Print

- Making prints
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Clay

- Developing form in clay
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Construction

- Making constructions
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Fabric and fibre

- Creating in fabric and fibre
  - Looking and responding
-

# Planning

## Structure and presentation

The content of the visual arts curriculum for infant classes is presented in two sections:

- a section entitled 'Concepts and skills development', which outlines the concepts and skills the child should develop as he/she engages in visual arts activities
- a section comprising six *strands*, each of which is a medium for visual expression. Two interrelated strand units form the strands, the first of which suggests a range of art-making activities. The second suggests activities in looking at and responding to the visual environment and to art works. Activities in one strand unit inform activities in the other and together they provide the context for learning in art. Exemplars are shown in italic type throughout the content section. They are suggestions, and therefore not prescriptive.

## The strands for infant classes

The child at infant level will enjoy looking at, touching and poking at interesting objects and will enjoy a stimulating classroom with colourful displays that include objects with interesting shapes and textures. At first, a variety of marks, lines and shapes will be used to express what he/she knows and sees. Through experience, and using different drawing and painting instruments, a set of symbols will evolve for what he/she wants to express visually, for example self, family, friends, home and play.

The child's use of colour may not bear any relationship to how the painted object or figure actually is. For example, a cat may be painted red, and this process should not be interfered with. He/she will learn to distinguish between lighter and darker colours and to create pattern and rhythm in drawing and painting. Print-making will involve experimenting with simple shapes using the simplest techniques.

The child will enjoy pounding and pulling clay and through these experiences will find ways of expressing ideas in three-dimensional form. Activities in construction can sometimes be on a large scale to give the child the experience of creating space and of being in that space. Exploratory work in fabric and fibre will help to reinforce the child's understanding of, for example, colour, pattern and texture and help to give an insight into how fabrics are structured. Work will be enriched by opportunities to look at art works that relate to the child's own work.

## Selecting content

The programme should be broad and balanced and should be planned to ensure continuity and progression and to obviate significant gaps. During the two-year period the child should experience interrelated activities, as suggested by the strand units, in all the strands.

## Linkage and integration

Opportunities for *linkage* (i.e. within the visual arts curriculum) and for *integration* (i.e. cross-curricular integration) are indicated at the end of each strand. *Linkage* can be achieved in the following ways:

- through concepts and skills development using different media, for example developing awareness of colour through painting and print-making and through activities with fabric and fibre
- through activities that develop a theme in a number of media, for example interpreting the theme of 'my friends' in drawings, clay, and in a mixed-media collage.

Opportunities for *integration* (especially with music, drama and dance) should be identified when the visual arts programme is being planned. Careful planning will ensure that visual arts objectives are clearly defined within integrated activities.

# Concepts and skills development for infant classes

*Through completing the strand units of the visual arts curriculum the child should be enabled to*

---

## An awareness of line

- begin to discover that lines can have a variety of qualities and can make shapes
- create movement with lines
- begin to represent familiar figures and objects with free lines and shapes

## An awareness of shape

- begin to develop sensitivity to qualities of flat shape
- invent and work with shapes that have a variety of characteristics

## An awareness of form

- become aware of the three-dimensional nature of form and of form in objects  
*volume in a toy, an animal, a ball, a box, in his/her head*
- handle, feel, manipulate and begin to form clay

## An awareness of colour and tone

- become sensitive to colour in his/her surroundings
- recognise and mix primary colours and tones
- distinguish between obviously light and dark colours
- use colour expressively

## An awareness of texture

- begin to explore the relationship between how things feel and how they look
- create texture with a variety of materials and tools

### An awareness of pattern and rhythm

- become aware of pattern and rhythm in his/her visual surroundings and in his/her work in repeated use of line types and shapes

*raindrops in a puddle, clouds in the sky, markings on a stone, bricklaying, railings, fields*

### An awareness of space

- become aware of how people and objects take up space
- examine simple structures in the visual environment
- begin to make basic structures

*balance open and closed boxes on each other.*

## Strand: Drawing

### Strand unit Making drawings

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- experiment with the marks that can be made with different drawing instruments on a range of surfaces  
*wiggly, smudgy, gritty, very light, very dark crayons, soft pencils, chalks, textured papers*  
*exploring the mark-making possibilities of computer drawing tools*
- make drawings based on vividly recalled feelings, real and imaginative experiences and stories  
*home and play*  
*dreams and longings*  
*special occasions*
- discover and draw line and shape as seen in natural and manufactured objects and discover that lines can make shapes  
*line in stones, leaves, hanks of yarn*  
*curvy, straight-edged, big, small, simple, complicated shapes*
- explore the relationship between how things feel and how they look  
*texture in natural and manufactured objects*  
*interpreting some of these textures in mark-making and rubbings.*

### Strand unit Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and the work of artists  
*describing what is happening in the drawing*  
*the different kinds of marks made*  
*how he/she enjoyed making the drawing*  
*how the artist might have worked*  
*his/her favourite part.*

#### *Linkage*

Paint and colour: communicating ideas through mark-making, pattern, rhythm, texture

#### *Integration*

Music: interpreting (in line) tempo, dynamics; depicting themes from songs

Drama: interpreting (in drawing) 'dressing-up play'

## Strand: Paint and colour

### Strand unit Painting

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- experiment with a variety of colour drawing instruments and media to develop colour awareness
  - paint, coloured pencils and crayons*
  - print, fabric and fibre*
  - experimenting with colour-mixing*
  - exploring the colour possibilities of computer painting tools*
- use colour to express vividly recalled feelings, experiences and imaginings
  - home and play*
  - dreams and longings*
  - special occasions*
- discover colour in the visual environment to help develop sensitivity to colour
  - beginning to distinguish between lighter and darker colours*
  - making paintings with a single colour and black and white*
- discover colour, pattern and rhythm in colourful objects
  - stones, flowers, colour magazine cut-outs, fabric scraps*
  - experimenting in matching their colours in an elementary way*
- discover the relationship between how things feel and how they look
  - texture in natural and manufactured objects*
  - texture created using paint, brushes and found objects in a variety of ways.*

### Strand unit Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and the work of artists
  - describing what is happening in the painting*
  - the colours used to create lines, shapes and light and dark areas*
  - how he/she enjoyed making them*
  - how the artist might have used colour*
  - his/her favourite part.*

#### *Linkage*

Fabric and fibre:developing colour awareness

#### *Integration*

Dance:interpreting (in paint and colour) themes explored through movement

# Strand: Print

## Strand unit Making prints

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- experiment with the effects that can be achieved with simple print-making
  - with oddments that have interesting textures or shapes*
  - with one or two paint colours to help focus on texture, shape, pattern*
  - beginning to organise the print marks purposefully*
  - discovering how simple prints could be further developed (e.g. overprinting)*
- use a variety of print-making techniques
  - making a variety of relief prints*
    - from textured items pressed into a slab of clay*
    - from his/her own marks made in the clay*
    - from cut or torn pieces of thin polystyrene*
  - experimenting with ways of repeating and combining examples of one or more prints*
  - printing with mask-outs*
    - masking an area of an inked surface with pieces of paper cut or torn to own design*
  - using computer experiments in shape and colour to design a print.*

## Strand unit Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at, handle and talk about familiar objects for experience of shape, texture, pattern
- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and art prints composed of simple shapes and textures
  - describing the print*
  - line, shape, texture, pattern*
  - how he/she enjoyed making them*
  - how the artist possibly made them*
  - what he/she likes best about the print*
- look at and talk about examples of simple print design in everyday use
  - posters, wallpaper, fabrics with simple repeat or other design, packaging, wrapping paper.*

### *Linkage*

Drawing: developing awareness of shape through drawing

Paint and colour: developing colour awareness

### *Integration*

Mathematics: discovering pattern in shape and colour

# Strand: Clay

## Strand unit Developing form in clay

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- explore and discover the possibilities of clay as a medium for imaginative expression
  - squeezing, pinching, pulling, squashing, prodding a small ball of clay*
  - tearing pieces from the clay and putting them together again*
  - beginning to distinguish between shapes that lie flat and solid forms that stand up on their own*
  - making a variety of forms in clay*
    - fat, twisty, squat, bumpy*
- make a clay form and manipulate it with fingers to suggest a subject
  - turning a ball of clay into an imaginary creature*
  - making a variety of real or imaginary animals*
  - experimenting with surface mark-making, texture and pattern*
  - talking about the marks made*
- invent mixed-media pieces in both representational and non-representational modes
  - pressing sticks, lollipop sticks, feathers or buttons into the clay.*

## Strand unit Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at, handle and talk about objects with free-flowing forms
  - feeling and handling natural forms (e.g. smooth stones, pieces of smooth tree branches, suitable fruit)*
- look at, handle and talk about his/her own work, the work of other children and simple pieces of clay pottery
  - describing the clay form*
  - materials and tools used*
  - how he/she enjoyed manipulating the clay*
  - how the craftsperson may have worked with it*
  - what he/she likes best about the clay form.*

### *Linkage*

Drawing: beginning to develop awareness of form through drawing

Construction: observing forms seen in a spatial context

### *Integration*

Science: Materials—Properties and characteristics of materials; Designing and making

# Strand: Construction

## Strand unit Making constructions

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- explore and experiment with the properties and characteristics of materials in making structures
  - grouping, balancing and building with small components and with construction toys that allow free play*
  - discovering the tallest, lowest, widest, narrowest parts of the structure*
  - rearranging the structure*
- make imaginative structures
  - making an imaginative play structure with large boxes balanced on each other*
  - drawing or painting what it might be like to be in that structure*
  - making an imaginative dwelling using boxes, pieces of polystyrene*
  - painting the finished work in a limited colour range to focus on colour and pure colour (hue)*
  - making an imaginative plaything (e.g. making a space helmet or party hat using a large box)*
  - making a stable to explore line and shape in a structure.*

## Strand unit Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at, investigate and talk about spatial arrangements and balance in collections of objects and in photographs of natural and built structures
  - doll's house, toy buildings, pop-up structures, birds' nests, model farms, simple furniture in the room, cutlery trays*
- look at and talk about structures that are easily accessible and close at hand, at visually stimulating structures and at a range of common artefacts
  - a public building, farm buildings*
  - deciding how many pieces were used to make a table, a swing, a seesaw*
- look at and talk about his/her work and the work of other children
  - describing the structure*
  - the materials and tools chosen*
  - how the pieces were put together*
  - what he/she likes best about the work.*

### *Linkage*

Drawing: developing awareness of space through drawing

Clay: discovering a sense of depth in space through forming clay

### *Integration*

Drama: making an imaginative play structure, using space and objects to help create the make-believe world

## Strand: Fabric and fibre

### Strand unit Creating in fabric and fibre

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- explore the possibilities of fabric and fibre as media for imaginative expression
  - investigating open-weave fabric (e.g. hessian)*
  - discovering the effects that can be created by adding a variety of strings, ribbons or large beads*
  - discovering how different textures feel and how they compare when put together*
- make simple collages
  - developing a colourful theme in a simple collage of fabrics, fibres, beads, buttons*
  - 'dressing up' a life-size drawing of him/herself or of an imaginary creature*
  - making a collage with the emphasis on texture*
  - making a collage with the emphasis on rhythm (e.g. talking about moving, swirling water)*
- invent a costume
  - for an imaginary character.*

### Strand unit Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at, handle and talk about a variety of fabrics and fibres for experience of tactile, visual and structural qualities
  - soft, fluffy, coarse, stiff, warm, cool*
  - colour and pattern*
  - finely or thickly woven*
  - curtains, towels, dishcloths, clothes, ropes made of natural and synthetic fibres*
- look at and talk about his/her work and the work of other children
  - describing the piece of work*
  - the colours used to create shapes, textures, patterns*
  - how he/she enjoyed making it*
  - what he/she likes best about the work.*

#### *Linkage*

Drawing: developing awareness of texture

Paint and colour: developing colour awareness

Construction: discovering how materials can be used to make structures

#### *Integration*

Drama: inventing a costume for play, or for a character explored through drama

Science: Materials—Properties and characteristics of materials; Designing and making

First  
and second  
classes

# Overview

first and second classes

## *Concepts and skills development*

---

### Concepts

- An awareness of line
- An awareness of shape
- An awareness of form
- An awareness of colour and tone
- An awareness of texture
- An awareness of pattern and rhythm
- An awareness of space

*The concepts above and related skills are derived from the visual elements and will be developed as work is completed on the strands and strand units outlined below.*

---

### *Strands*

### *Strand units*

#### Drawing

- Making drawings
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Paint and colour

- Painting
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Print

- Making prints
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Clay

- Developing form in clay
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Construction

- Making constructions
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Fabric and fibre

- Creating in fabric and fibre
  - Looking and responding
-

# Planning

## Structure and presentation

The content of the visual arts curriculum for first and second classes is presented in two sections:

- a section entitled 'Concepts and skills development', which outlines the concepts and skills the child should develop as he/she engages in visual arts activities
- a section comprising six *strands*, each of which is a medium for visual expression. Two interrelated strand units form the strands, the first of which suggests a range of art-making activities. The second suggests activities in looking at and responding to the visual environment and to art works. Activities in one strand unit inform activities in the other and together they provide the context for learning in art. Exemplars are shown in italic type throughout the content section. They are suggestions, and therefore not prescriptive.

## The strands for first and second classes

The child at first and second-class level will enjoy looking at objects in the environment in a more focused way and will interpret what he/she sees in a more representational way. A greater awareness of how space is organised and some ability to show people in action will be evident in drawings and paintings. A growing sensitivity to colour subtleties will be evident in the child's ability to discriminate between variations in pure colour and tone and to recognise harmonious and complementary colours. Print-making will involve exploring shape and negative shape and a wider colour range. New techniques, such as stencilling and wax-resist, will be introduced.

The child will form clay with greater understanding and confidence and will produce simple objects. Activities in construction will stimulate the child to think about how the parts of a structure relate to the whole and to create structures of more than one space. Work in fabric and fibre is more structured and presents opportunities to stitch, to weave and to create soft sculptures or puppets. Work will be enriched by opportunities to see how artists express ideas that relate to the child's own work.

## Selecting content

The programme should be broad and balanced and should be planned to ensure continuity and progression and to obviate significant gaps. During the two-year period the child should experience interrelated activities, as suggested by the strand units, in all the strands.

## Linkage and integration

Opportunities for *linkage* (i.e. within the visual arts curriculum) and *integration* (i.e. cross-curricular integration) are indicated at the end of each strand. *Linkage* can be achieved in the following ways:

- through concepts and skills development in the different media, for example developing awareness of colour through painting and print-making and through activities with fabric and fibre
- through activities that develop a theme in a number of media, for example interpreting the theme 'my friend and I are playing with our toys' using construction materials, clay, fabric and fibre, paint, and coloured paper.

Opportunities for *integration* (especially with music, drama and dance) should be identified when the visual arts programme is being planned. Careful planning will ensure that visual arts objectives are clearly defined within integrated activities.

# Concepts and skills development for first and second classes

*Through completing the strand units of the visual arts curriculum the child should be enabled to*

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## An awareness of line

- recognise that lines have various properties and can create shapes, textures, patterns, movement
- look closely at the linear qualities of objects in the surroundings
- develop personal symbols (a *schema*) to represent familiar figures and objects visually

## An awareness of shape

- become sensitive to shape in the visual environment
- become aware of outline shape, silhouette and shadow shapes
- invent and experiment with shape in compositions  
*in collage, print, drawing and painting*

## An awareness of form

- become aware of the three-dimensional nature of form in the visual environment  
*volume in a rock, animal, ball, box, bowl, toy*
- explore the relationships between the parts and the whole form  
*experiment with balance*
- express understanding of form in clay

## An awareness of colour and tone

- develop sensitivity to colour in the visual environment
- begin to analyse colours and mix them more purposefully
- distinguish between tone and pure colour (hue)
- use colour and tone to create unity and emphasis in compositions  
*use tones of one colour to create effects*

## An awareness of texture

- explore the relationship between how things feel and how they look
- create variety in surface textures using a range of materials and tools

### An awareness of pattern and rhythm

- recognise pattern in the visual environment  
*snail shells, clouds, leaves, lichen on a wall, flowers, bricklaying, railings, fields, circus tent*
- become aware of repetition and variation in his/her own work and in the work of others  
*in line, shape, colour, form*

### An awareness of space

- develop awareness of how people and objects take up space
- begin to show relationships between objects and figures in drawings and paintings and show some sense of scale  
*making distant objects smaller by placing them on higher levels on the page*
- begin to develop a practical understanding of structure through construction activities.

## Strand: Drawing

### Strand unit Making drawings

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*The child should be enabled to*

- experiment with the marks, lines, shapes, textures, patterns and tones that can be made with different drawing instruments on a range of surfaces
  - interpreting, as appropriate, line, tone, texture, pattern*
  - using crayons, soft pencils, charcoal, chalks, textured papers, fabrics*
  - using a computer art program to experiment with marks, lines, shapes, pattern and rhythm*
- make drawings based on his/her personal or imaginative life with a growing sense of spatial relationships
  - friends skipping, playing ball, running in the yard*
  - imaginative themes based on the fantastic and the magical*
- explore shape as seen in natural and manufactured objects and become aware of the shape of shadows cast by objects
  - making silhouette drawings of simple objects*
  - drawing the shapes of objects and their shadows*
- draw from observation
  - a variety of natural and manufactured objects (e.g. a tree, leaf, flower, fruit, vegetable, objects grouped on shelves or display tables)*
  - a classmate.*

## Strand unit    Looking and responding

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*The child should be enabled to*

- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and the work of artists
  - describing what is happening in the drawing*
  - lines, shapes, textures, patterns, tones created and arranged to compose the drawing*
  - how materials and tools were used and effects created*
  - what was intended*
  - what he/she likes best about the drawing.*

### *Linkage*

Print: organising line, shape, pattern in a print design

Construction: discovering how a 2-D drawing translates into 3-D reality

Fabric and fibre: developing awareness of line, shape and texture

These and other possible links between strands could be developed as mixed media activities.

A mixed-media approach within strands is also possible.

### *Integration*

Music: interpreting (in drawing) simple rhythm patterns; interpreting themes from songs

Dance: interpreting (in drawing) themes explored through movement

## Strand: Paint and colour

### Strand unit Painting

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*The child should be enabled to*

- explore colour with a variety of materials and media
  - paint, crayons, chalks, coloured pencils, felt-tipped or fibre-tipped pens*
  - print, collage, fabric and fibre*
  - using a computer art program to experiment with colour and to create images*
- use colour expressively to interpret themes based on his/her personal or imaginative life
  - particular moments from stories, poems, songs, music*
  - what might happen next in a story*
- paint objects chosen for their colour possibilities
  - flowers and other objects from the nature table*
  - toys with imagined background detail*
- discover colour in the visual environment and become sensitive to tonal variations between light and dark, and to variations in pure colour (hue)
  - discover colour and tone through themes chosen for their colour possibilities (e.g. a sunny or stormy sky)*
- discover harmony and contrast in natural and manufactured objects and through themes chosen for their colour possibilities
  - features that blend with their environment and those that stand out*
  - colour-and-shape games based on camouflage*
- discover colour, pattern and rhythm in natural and manufactured objects and interpret them in his/her work
  - using repeated complementary colours to add variety to his/her work*
- explore the relationship between how things feel and how they look
  - texture in natural and manufactured objects*
    - rough, smooth, bumpy, prickly, fluffy*
    - interpreting a variety of these in colour and tone*
    - creating creamy, crumbly textures.*

## Strand unit    Looking and responding

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*The child should be enabled to*

- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and the work of artists

*describing what is happening in the painting*

*the colours and tones chosen*

*the lines, shapes, textures and pattern created*

*how they are arranged in the painting*

*how colour was used and effects created*

*what he/she or the artist was trying to express*

*what he/she likes best about the painting.*

### *Linkage*

Drawing: interpreting pattern, rhythm, texture in drawing

Print: creating texture, shape, negative shape, pattern

Fabric and fibre: developing colour awareness and creating colourful effects

### *Integration*

Music: interpreting (in paint and colour) responses to a story told in sound

History: interpreting (in paint and colour) themes from stories

# Strand: Print

## Strand unit Making prints

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*The child should be enabled to*

- experiment with the effects that can be achieved with simple print-making techniques

*with oddments that have interesting textures and/or shapes*

*making rubbings from tree bark, fabrics*

*using a limited colour range to focus on texture, shape, negative shape, pattern*

*discovering how simple prints could be further developed by overprinting with contrasting colours and with the same or contrasting shapes*

- use a variety of print-making techniques to make theme-based or non-representational prints

*making a variety of relief prints*

*composing a relief print block using one or more colours*

*creating a design for a print by drawing thick and thin lines into a slab of clay*

*printing with mask-outs*

*masking areas of an inked surface from which prints have already been taken*

*making stencils*

*spray or sponge painting over stencils cut to his/her design*

*making wax-resist pictures*

*sponge painting over a wax crayon or candle design*

*making wax-crayon transfer prints*

*using wax crayons of various colours to print out as a coloured drawing*

*doing a number of exploded designs using a computer art program.*

## Strand unit    Looking and responding

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*The child should be enabled to*

- look at, handle and talk about familiar objects for experience of shape, texture and pattern
- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and art prints that have relatively simple shapes, textures and patterns

*describing the print*

*line, shape, colour and tone, texture, pattern and how they combine*

*how materials and tools were used to create effects*

*what he/she likes about the print*

*looking at some prints to investigate print-making techniques (e.g. comparing the lithograph with his/her own wax-resist technique)*

- look at examples of print design in everyday use.

### *Linkage*

Drawing: interpreting line, shape, pattern in drawing

Paint and colour: developing a sense of pattern and rhythm

### *Integration*

Mathematics: developing awareness of 2-D shape

## Strand: Clay

### Strand unit    Developing form in clay

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*The child should be enabled to*

Developing form in clay

- explore and discover the possibilities of clay as a medium for imaginative expression

*squeezing, pinching, pulling, squashing, prodding, rolling a small ball of clay*

*tearing pieces from the clay and putting them together again*

*making forms of different sizes that have simple flowing contours*

- change the form of a small ball of clay, using the medium expressively
  - making animals or birds, real or imagined, and finishing them with surface texture and/or incised decoration*
  - making sturdy clay figures based on stories, poems, songs, music, drama*
- work inventively with cubes or oblong blocks of clay and add details to suggest a solid structure
  - designing and making a house*
  - designing and making a variety of buildings to suggest a town*

- make simple pottery

*designing and making a pinch-pot or a coil-built pot*

*finishing it with incised decoration or paint and varnishing it when dry*

- experiment with and develop line, shape, texture and pattern in clay

*decorating clay slabs with patterns of small clay coils and pellets*

*experimenting with textural effects*

*working in low relief on small, thick slabs of clay.*

## Strand unit    Looking and responding

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*The child should be enabled to*

- look at, handle and talk about natural and manufactured objects for experience of three-dimensional form

*pebbles, shells, fir cones, soft, moulded or carved toys, simple pottery*

- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and figures by famous sculptors with contrasting styles (or slides or prints)

*describing the form*

*how it felt to work with the clay*

*how the sculptor may have worked*

*what he/she or the artist was trying to express*

*what he/she likes best about the work.*

### *Linkage and integration*

Drawing: developing awareness of form through drawing

### *Integration*

Drama: interpreting (as sturdy clay figures) characters explored through drama

## Strand: Construction

### Strand unit Making constructions

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*The child should be enabled to*

- explore and experiment with the properties and characteristics of materials in making structures

*grouping, balancing and building with relatively small components and with construction toys that allow free play*

*how some materials help to create or suggest form*

*how structure and balance are achieved*

*how the various outlines and spaces are created*

*how the different parts relate to the whole*

*how materials can be joined together*

*how some materials can add colour, pattern, texture, interest*

- make imaginative structures

*designing a large imaginative complex with a variety of spaces for inventive use (e.g. a castle)*

*designing an imaginative structure with some complexity in the division of space (e.g. a miniature theatre set)*

*designing an imaginative plaything from waste material (e.g. a robot, a fantastic toy).*

## Strand unit Looking and responding

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*The child should be enabled to*

- look at collections or photographs of natural and built structures and investigate spatial arrangements, balance and outline and how the spaces created relate to the whole  
*habitats of burrowing animals, towers*
- look at and talk about his/her work and the work of other children  
*describing the structure*  
*the materials and tools chosen and other possible choices*  
*how the spaces were arranged*  
*how balance was achieved*  
*what he/she was trying to express*  
*what he/she likes best about the work*
- look at and talk about a local building complex, at a famous building and at visually stimulating artefacts (or slides or prints)  
*a shopping centre, a farm building, the school, a castle*  
*toys, machines, playground furniture.*

### *Linkage*

Drawing: developing spatial awareness in drawings

Print and colour: discovering how colour can add interest to structures

Clay: developing awareness of how objects are solid and take up space

### *Integration*

Drama: making a miniature theatre set

Science: Materials—Properties and characteristics of materials: Designing and making

## Strand: Fabric and fibre

### Strand unit    Creating in fabric and fibre

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*The child should be enabled to*

- explore and discover the possibilities of fabric and fibre as media for imaginative expression

*experimenting in changing open-weave fabric (e.g. hessian)*

*removing sets of fibres in either direction*

*weaving in contrasting fibres*

*threading in decorative items*

*talking about and inventing stitches*

*discovering and talking about how different textures feel and how they compare when put together*

- make small inventive pieces with fabric and fibre

*designing and making a non-representational or theme-based collage or applique*

*developing colour, texture, shape awareness*

*paying close attention to and talking about the shapes created, the shapes between the shapes and whether some of them overlap*

*decorating a small piece of fabric with stitches and other additions*

*creating line, shape, colour, texture*

*filling in some of the shapes created with colourful and/or textural effects*

*designing and making soft sculptures or puppets*

*using old clothes*

*weaving small individual pieces*

*creating colourful and/or textural effects*

- invent a costume

*using old clothes*

*sewing, lacing or pinning large fabric strips together to create a magic cloak.*

## Strand unit    Looking and responding

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*The child should be enabled to*

- look at, handle and talk about a variety of fabrics and fibres for experience of tactile, visual and spatial qualities
  - soft, fluffy, coarse, stiff, warm, cool, finely or thickly woven*
  - colour and pattern*
  - covering and folding qualities*
- look at and talk about his/her work and the work of other children
  - describing the work*
  - the colours, textures, patterns and effects created*
  - what he/she intended*
  - what he/she likes best about the work*
- look at and talk about fabrics crafts and artefacts and visit a craftsperson at work if possible.

### *Linkage*

Drawing: developing awareness of texture, pattern

Paint and colour: developing colour awareness

Construction: beginning to develop a practical understanding of structure, e.g. in a costume or in jewellery

### *Integration*

Drama: making a miniature theatre set

Science: Materials—Properties and characteristics of materials; Designing and making

History: interpreting (as puppets or in costume) characters from stories

Third  
and fourth  
classes

# Overview

third and fourth classes

## *Concepts and skills development*

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### Concepts

- An awareness of line
- An awareness of shape
- An awareness of form
- An awareness of colour and tone
- An awareness of texture
- An awareness of pattern and rhythm
- An awareness of space

*The concepts above and related skills are derived from the visual elements and will be developed as work is completed on the strands and strand units outlined below.*

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### *Strands*

### *Strand units*

#### Drawing

- Making drawings
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Paint and colour

- Painting
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Print

- Making prints
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Clay

- Developing form in clay
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Construction

- Making constructions
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Fabric and fibre

- Creating in fabric and fibre
  - Looking and responding
-

# Planning

## Structure and presentation

The content of the visual arts curriculum for third and fourth classes is presented in two sections:

- a section entitled 'Concepts and skills development', which outlines the concepts and skills the child should develop as he/she engages in art activities
- a section comprising six *strands*, each of which is a medium for visual expression. Two interrelated strand units form the strands, the first of which suggests a range of art-making activities. The second suggests activities in looking at and responding to the visual environment and to art works. Activities in one strand unit inform activities in the other and together they provide the context for learning in art. Exemplars are shown in italic type throughout the content section. They are suggestions, and therefore not prescriptive.

## The strands for third and fourth classes

The child at third and fourth-class level will draw and paint with greater detail and with a more developed sense of context. He/she will enjoy drawing and painting, from direct observation, subjects that would include still life, views of the surroundings or a classmate. Devices such as overlapping will be used to suggest space in depth on a page.

The child will enjoy mixing more complex colours and tones and will recognise and experiment with warm and cool colours and with complementary colours for the effects they create. Print-making techniques will include monoprinting, and he/she will make prints for functional use as well as for their own sake, using a variety of techniques.

The child will enjoy making and decorating clay pots and figures as well as working in low relief. There would also be opportunities to make papier mâché masks. Construction activities include planning and making a building complex with spaces for multiple use. The child will also have opportunities to stitch a design in appliqué, weave a wall-hanging or make a soft toy in fabric and fibre. Work will be enriched by opportunities to see how artists express ideas and solve problems that relate to the child's own work.

## Selecting content

The programme should be broad and balanced and should be planned to ensure continuity and progression and to obviate significant gaps. During the two-year period the child should experience interrelated activities, as suggested by the strand units, in all the strands.

## Linkage and integration

Opportunities for *linkage* (i.e. within the visual arts curriculum) and for *integration* (i.e. cross-curricular integration) are indicated at the end of each strand. *Linkage* can be achieved in the following ways:

- through concepts and skills development in the different media, for example developing awareness of colour through painting and print-making and through work in fabric and fibre
- through activities that develop a theme in a number of media, for example developing the theme 'waiting at the bus stop' in drawings, paintings or clay and in a mixed-media piece to create a wall frieze.

Opportunities for *integration* (especially with music, drama and dance) should be identified when the visual arts programme is being planned. Careful planning will ensure that visual arts objectives are clearly defined within integrated activities.

# Concepts and skills development for third and fourth classes

*Through completing the strand units of the visual arts curriculum the child should be enabled to*

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## An awareness of line

- recognise that lines can have varying qualities and can create shapes, textures, patterns, rhythms and movement
- look closely at and interpret the visual environment with increased sensitivity to materials and tools
- begin to show more keenly observed action in figure drawing and painting
- begin to use line sketches and diagrams to clarify design ideas to be interpreted in three-dimensional form

## An awareness of shape

- become sensitive to shape and to relationships between shapes in the visual environment
- invent and experiment with a variety of shape characteristics to create movement, balance, contrast, emphasis and/or a sense of space in drawings, paintings, print, collage and appliqué

## An awareness of form

- recognise the three-dimensional nature of form in objects  
*a mountain, a car, a teapot, a piece of fruit*
- explore the relationships between the parts and the whole of a complex form  
*balance, symmetry, asymmetry, rhythm, movement, the play of light and shade, aesthetic satisfaction*
- interpret form, creating surface texture in line, pattern and rhythm
- use malleable materials as media in which to design and invent

## An awareness of colour and tone

- develop sensitivity to colour and tone in the visual environment
- analyse and mix increasingly subtle colours and tones
- become aware of the effects of warm and cool colours, of complementary and harmonious colours and of variations in tone
- begin to use colour and tone to create rhythm, emphasis, contrast and/or spatial effects in two and three-dimensional work

### An awareness of texture

- explore the relationship between how things feel and how they look
- create variety and contrast in surface texture using a range of materials and tools
- experiment in interpreting texture in drawing and painting

### An awareness of pattern and rhythm

- discover and explore pattern in nature and in the visual surroundings  
*ripples in water, sand formations on the shoreline, flowers*
- recognise and purposefully use repetition and variation of line, shape, texture, colour and tone in two and three-dimensional work

### An awareness of space

- develop awareness of how people and objects occupy space
- create space and depth in drawings and paintings  
*by diminishing sizes of figures and objects further away*  
*by overlapping*
- develop an understanding of how spaces can be organised through experience of construction.

# Strand: Drawing

## Strand unit Making drawings

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*The child should be enabled to*

- experiment with the marks, lines, shapes, textures, patterns and tones that can be made with different drawing instruments on a range of surfaces

*looking closely at specially chosen objects and discovering qualities of line, shape, texture, light and dark*

*concentrating, as appropriate, on outline drawing, silhouette, shape, tone, texture, pattern and rhythm*

*using a computer art program to create and modify images and to organise a composition*

- make drawings from recalled experiences, emphasising pattern, detail, context and location

*being in a familiar place*

*pastimes and games*

- express his/her imaginative life and interpret imaginative themes using inventive pattern and detail

*stories, poems, songs, imaginary people, places, creatures and objects*

- draw from observation

*still life arrangements*

*still life arrangements adding imagined backgrounds*

*aspects of the environment viewed from different angles*

*the human figure (e.g. a classmate posing in different positions).*

## Strand unit    Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and the work of artists

*describing what is happening in the drawing*

*the qualities of line, shape, texture, pattern and rhythm and tone created*

*how space in depth is suggested and background detail*

*how action is suggested*

*what was intended*

*problems encountered and solved*

*the work of other artists who have interpreted the theme in a similar or dissimilar way*

*what he/she feels about the drawing.*

### *Linkage*

Paint and colour: developing awareness of spatial effects of colour and tone

Print: developing awareness of shape and the relationships between shapes

Fabric and fibre: developing awareness of tactile, visual and spatial qualities

These and other possible links between strands could be developed as mixed-media activities.

A mixed-media approach within strands is also possible.

### *Integration*

Music: interpreting (in drawing) songs and characters, events or atmosphere portrayed in a story told in sound

Drama: interpreting (in drawing) themes explored through drama

# Strand: Paint and colour

## Strand unit Painting

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*The child should be enabled to*

- explore colour with a variety of materials and media
  - paint, crayons, oil or chalk pastels, coloured pencils, felt-tipped pens and fibre-tipped pens*
  - print, small-scale collage*
  - using a computer art program to experiment with the effects of warm and cool colours*
- make paintings based on recalled feelings and experiences, exploring the spatial effects of colour and tone, using overlapping, and with some consideration of scale
  - recent and vividly recalled events from own life events he/she identifies with*
  - everyday familiar locations*
- express his/her imaginative life and interpret imaginative themes using colour expressively
  - stories, poems, songs, music*
  - what might happen next in an adventure story*
  - making large-scale group paintings of characters or story features*
- paint from observation
  - looking closely for subtle colour combinations in natural and manufactured objects*
  - making large-scale paintings that emphasise colour, tone, texture, shape, rhythm*
  - the human figure showing action*
  - portraits of classmates posing for different activities*
- discover colour in the visual environment and become sensitive to colour differences and tonal variations through colour mixing
  - mixing and reproducing as accurately as possible the colours of objects of visual interest*
  - exploring the spatial effects of colour and tone through themes chosen for their colour possibilities*
  - using colour and tone to create a background, middle ground and foreground in simple still lifes, landscapes and cityscapes*
- discover harmony and contrast in natural and manufactured objects and through themes chosen for their colour possibilities
  - working out a colour scheme for a three-dimensional model he/she may have made*
  - playing colour-mixing games*
- discover pattern and rhythm in natural and manufactured objects and use them purposefully in his/her work
  - using repetition and variation of contrasting colours and varieties of line types and textures to add variety and unity to a piece of work*
- explore the relationship between how things feel and how they look
  - discovering texture in natural and manufactured objects*
  - interpreting a variety of textures in colour and tone and with varied brush strokes.*

## Strand unit    Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and the work of artists

*describing what is happening in the painting*

*the colours and tones chosen*

*how the shapes, textures, pattern and rhythm and contrasts combine in the composition*

*how materials and tools were used to create different effects and whether they might have been used differently*

*what he/she or the artist was trying to express*

*the work of other artists who have interpreted the theme in a similar or dissimilar way*

*what he/she feels about the painting.*

### *Linkage*

Drawing: making a composition

Print: developing colour awareness

Construction: developing awareness of the effects of light and shade on colour

### *Integration*

Dance: interpreting (in paint and colour) themes explored through movement

Science: Energy and forces—Light

# Strand: Print

## Strand unit Making prints

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- experiment with a widening range of print-making techniques

*printing with a limited colour range to help focus on creating more complex images in shape, texture, pattern*

*discovering how simple prints could be further developed (e.g. overlapping shapes)*

- use a widening range of print-making techniques to make theme-based or non-representational prints

*making a variety of relief prints*

*composing relief print blocks, emphasising line, shape, negative shape, texture, pattern*

*impressing found items into a slab of clay*

*masking out some areas*

*making a variety of small-scale relief prints (stamp printing)*

*creating interesting patterns and rhythms by juxtaposing stamps*

*making stencils*

*spray or sponge painting over stencils cut to his/her design*

*making monoprints emphasising line and shape*

*combining with other techniques*

- make prints for functional uses (as well as for their own sake)

*for use on wrapping paper, boxes, fabric*

*making posters for specific purposes*

- use a computer art program to create original images that are not dependent on clip art

*organising a layout for a print design.*

## Strand unit    Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at, handle and talk about natural and manufactured objects for experience of texture, shape, pattern
- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and art prints or print design that emphasise the play of shape, texture or line
- look at and talk about examples of design in everyday use.

*describing the print*

*line, shape, negative shape, texture, pattern, colour used to create the image or design*

*how materials and tools were used to create and further develop the print*

*how problems were solved*

*what he/she likes about the work*

*looking at some prints to investigate print-making techniques (as well as for their own sake)*

*comparing stencils and monoprints with his/her work*

### *Linkage*

Drawing: experimenting with marks, lines, shapes, textures, patterns, tones

Paint and colour: developing colour awareness

### *Integration*

Mathematics: creating patterns with 2-D shapes

# Strand: Clay

## Strand unit Developing form in clay

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- explore and discover the possibilities of clay as a medium for imaginative expression
  - squeezing, pinching, pulling, squashing, prodding, rolling and re-forming a small ball of clay*
  - tearing pieces from the clay and putting them together again without a noticeable joining*
  - experimenting with non-representational forms*
  - experimenting in balancing some of the forms*
- make simple clay pots
  - designing and making a pinch-pot or a coil-built pot*
  - finishing it with incised decoration, with coil and pellet design or painting it when dry*
  - making imaginative pinch-pot creatures*
- make sturdy figures in clay using the medium expressively and with imaginative detail
  - from stories and poems, songs, music, drama*
- work inventively and expressively with cubes or oblong blocks of clay
  - designing and making a theme-based structure (e.g. a house for a particular purpose)*
  - designing and making non-representational structures (e.g. balancing and interlocking forms)*
- develop line, shape, texture and pattern in clay
  - decorating clay slabs with coil and pellet designs in line, shape and pattern and/or with textural effects*
  - making simple low-relief sculptures, considering shape and negative shape (e.g. illustrating a moment from stories, poems, songs)*
  - making small pieces of incised jewellery (e.g. medals, pendants)*
- work inventively and expressively with papier mâché
  - designing and making papier mâché masks to illustrate stories, poems, songs or festivals*
  - designing and making exotic papier mâché heads.*

## Strand unit Looking and responding

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*The child should be enabled to*

- look at, handle and talk about natural and manufactured objects for experience of three-dimensional form  
*pottery, household items with interesting forms*
- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and figurative and non-representational pieces of sculpture (slides or prints)  
*describing the form*  
*the malleable nature of the clay*  
*how he/she or the sculptor used materials*  
*what he/she or the sculptor was trying to express*  
*balance, symmetry and overall effect*  
*problems experienced and solved*  
*what he/she likes about the work*
- look at and talk about ritual masks, street theatre masks and figures, and functional and decorative pottery (or slides or prints)  
*bowls with decorative surfaces, pottery based on animal forms.*

### *Linkage*

Drawing: developing awareness of form through drawing

Construction: developing awareness of balance through construction

### *Integration*

Drama: interpreting (in clay and papier mâché masks) characters explored through drama

# Strand: Construction

## Strand unit Making constructions

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- explore and experiment with the properties and characteristics of materials in making structures

*group, balance and build with a variety of materials*

*how the different parts relate to the whole*

*the various outlines and spaces created*

*whether the structure is delicately balanced or robust and solid*

*exploring the possibilities of free-standing abstract paper sculpture*

*the spaces created, the play of light on the structure*

- make drawings from observation to analyse the structures of buildings and the natural structures of plants

*investigating structure and balance in contemporary architecture and sculpture, in cast-iron structures, in bridges and in nature*

- make imaginative structures

*designing a model for a building complex*

*talking about what functions different parts of the complex might serve*

*designing a relief structure, concentrating on planes, shapes, rhythm, texture*

*designing papier m ch forms and structures (e.g. exotic heads).*

## Strand unit Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at collections or photographs of natural and built structures and investigate spatial arrangements, balance, outline  
*honeycomb, bridges, tower blocks, farm buildings*
- look at and talk about his/her work and the work of other children  
*describing the structure*  
*the materials and tools chosen for the task*  
*the arrangement and functions of the spaces created*  
*how balance was achieved*  
*how construction or aesthetic problems were resolved*  
*what he/she likes about the work*
- look at and talk about interesting examples of contemporary architecture and the work of great architects and builders of history.

### *Linkage*

Drawing: analysing the structure of buildings and plants through drawings

Paint and colour: exploring the spatial effects of colour and tone

Clay: developing awareness of relationships between parts and the whole form

### *Integration*

Drama: exploring the organisation of space in making a model theatre set

Science: Materials—Properties and characteristics of materials

# Strand: Fabric and fibre

## Strand unit    Creating in fabric and fibre

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*The child should be enabled to*

- explore and discover the possibilities of fabric and fibre as media for imaginative expression
  - experimenting with line, shape, colour, pattern and texture with variously textured fibres and open-weave fabric as a stimulus for further creativity*
  - exploring ways of inventing stitches for decorative effect*
- make small inventive pieces in fabric and fibre
  - designing and making a collage, emphasising colour*
  - designing and making an appliqué piece within a limited colour range to express personal themes*
  - decorating a piece of fabric with invented stitches*
  - creating small individual pieces with basic knitting stitches*
    - armbands or hairbands*
    - combining knitting with decorative items to make individual pieces of jewellery*
    - emphasising colour, pattern, texture*
  - weaving a wall-hanging and incorporating decorative items into the fabric*
- make soft toys, emphasising individuality and variety
  - knotting pieces of stuffed fabric to create forms*
  - stitching on features, limbs and other embellishments*
- invent a costume for a character from a story or use fabric as a stimulus for an exotic costume design
  - creating costumes by stitching and pinning pieces of fabric to items of old clothing.*

## Strand unit Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at, handle and talk about a variety of fabrics and fibres for experience of tactile, visual and spatial qualities
  - soft, rough, coarse, stiff, warm, cool, thinly or thickly woven, textured*
  - colour and pattern*
  - covering, folding, draping qualities*
  - the work of artists who have used these fabrics (slides or prints)*
- look at and talk about his/her work and the work of other children
  - describing the piece of work*
  - the qualities of the materials and tools chosen*
  - those he/she liked best to work with*
  - how he/she invented, adapted and/or combined stitches for decorative effect*
  - colour combinations, patterns, textural effects achieved*
  - what he/she likes best about the work*
- look at and talk about woven, embroidered, knitted and other fabrics, including interesting items of clothing from different times and cultures
- look at and talk about fabric crafts and artefacts and visit a craftsperson at work if possible.

### *Linkage*

Paint and colour: developing colour awareness

Construction: developing awareness of suitability of materials for task

### *Integration*

Drama: inventing a costume for a character explored through drama

Science: Materials—Properties and characteristics of materials

Fifth  
and sixth  
classes

# Overview

fifth and sixth classes

## *Concepts and skills development*

---

### Concepts

- An awareness of line
- An awareness of shape
- An awareness of form
- An awareness of colour and tone
- An awareness of texture
- An awareness of pattern and rhythm
- An awareness of space

*The concepts above and related skills are derived from the visual elements and will be developed as work is completed on the strands and strand units outlined below.*

---

### *Strands*

### *Strand units*

#### Drawing

- Making drawings
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Paint and colour

- Painting
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Print

- Making prints
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Clay

- Developing form in clay
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Construction

- Making constructions
  - Looking and responding
- 

#### Fabric and fibre

- Creating in fabric and fibre
  - Looking and responding
-

# Planning

## Structure and presentation

The content of the visual arts curriculum for fifth and sixth classes is presented in two sections:

- a section entitled 'Concepts and skills development', which outlines the concepts and skills the child should develop as he/she engages in art activities
- a section comprising six *strands*, each of which is a medium for visual expression. Two interrelated strand units form the strands, the first of which suggests a range of art-making activities. The second suggests activities in looking at and responding to the visual environment and to art works. Activities in one strand unit inform activities in the other and together they provide the context for learning in art. Exemplars are shown in italic type throughout the content section. They are suggestions, and therefore not prescriptive.

## The strands for fifth and sixth classes

The child at fifth and sixth-class level will have lots of opportunities to work from observation, to use a viewfinder to draw aspects of his/her surroundings, to arrange and draw or paint a still life and to draw or paint a classmate in some detail. Devices such as overlapping and aerial and linear perspective will be used to suggest space in depth on a page. He/she will enjoy drawing and painting futuristic fashion, designing and sketching a plan for a three-dimensional model with moving parts, and inventing cartoon characters.

The child will experiment in using harmonious and complementary colours for their effects in compositions. Print-making techniques will include relief prints, monoprints, pictorial rubbings and silk-screen prints. There will be opportunities to model the human head in clay and to make exotic heads of a variety of creatures in papier mâché. Construction activities will include wire structures and a model with moving parts. Collage, knitting, weaving, character toys and costume-making are among the activities suggested for fabric and fibre.

Work will be enriched by opportunities to study how artists express ideas and solve problems similar to his/her own while avoiding the deadening effect of direct copying.

## Selecting content

The programme should be broad and balanced and should be planned to ensure continuity and progression and to obviate significant gaps. During the two-year period, the child should experience interrelated activities, as suggested by the strand units, in all the strands.

## Linkage and integration

Opportunities for *linkage* (i.e. within the visual arts curriculum) and for *integration* (i.e. cross-curricular integration) are indicated at the end of each strand. *Linkage* can be achieved in the following ways:

- through concepts and skills development in the different media, for example developing awareness of colour through painting and print-making and through work in fabric and fibre
- through activities that develop a theme, for example interpreting the theme 'the beach' in drawings, colour sketches and papier mâché and as a semi-abstract mixed-media piece.

Opportunities for *integration* (especially with music, drama and dance) should be identified when the visual arts programme is being planned. Careful planning will ensure that visual arts objectives are clearly defined within integrated activities.

## Concepts and skills development for fifth and sixth classes

*Through completing the strand units of the visual arts curriculum the child should be enabled to*

---

### An awareness of line

- recognise that lines can have varying qualities, e.g. of density, texture, pattern and direction, and can create shapes and suggest movement, rhythm and form
- use line expressively and with greater sensitivity to materials and tools
- interpret the human figure and progress beyond personal symbols (or *schema*)
- demonstrate more concentrated observation in interpreting the visual world
- use drawings and diagrams to solve design problems and to clarify and develop ideas to be carried out in another medium

### An awareness of shape

- be sensitive to shape in the visual surroundings
- invent and experiment with a variety of shapes to create rhythm, balance, contrast, emphasis and/or a sense of space in drawings, paintings and other media
- focus sometimes on shape, edges and layout on the picture plane without emphasis on depth
- use overlapping shapes and scale to suggest three-dimensional depth

### An awareness of form

- notice the three-dimensional nature of form and explore the relationships between the parts and the whole in complex forms
- analyse and interpret the human figure and the structure of the human head in clay
- develop the surface of a clay form using line, rhythm, texture and pattern
- use three-dimensional materials as media in which to design and invent.

### An awareness of colour and tone

- develop sensitivity to subtleties in colour and tone in the visual environment
- develop awareness of the effects of warm and cool colours, of complementary and harmonious colours and of variations in tone
- mix and use subtle colours and tones and create rhythm, emphasis, contrast, spatial effects, mood and atmosphere in two and three-dimensional work

### An awareness of texture

- explore the relationship between how things feel and how they look
- create variety, contrast and emphasis in surface textures using a range of materials and tools
- use a variety of drawing instruments to suggest texture from observation of objects

### An awareness of pattern and rhythm

- analyse pattern in the visual environment through drawing, painting and other media  
*peeling birch bark, the waves on the sea, scaffolding, fishing nets, stone buildings*
- use repetition and variation of line, shape, texture, colour and tone to create contrasting and harmonious effects

### An awareness of space

- continue to develop awareness of how people and objects occupy space
- develop basic understanding of aerial and linear perspective (spatial organisation)
- design and construct a model with multiple spaces, open and closed  
*with cells, rooms, enclosures.*

## Strand: Drawing

### Strand unit Making drawings

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- experiment with the marks, lines, shapes, textures, patterns and tones that can be made with different drawing instruments on a range of surfaces, demonstrating increasing sensitivity and control
  - looking closely at specially chosen objects and interpreting qualities of line, shape, texture, light and shade*
  - concentrating as appropriate on outline drawing, silhouette, shape, tone, texture, pattern and rhythm and structure*
- discover how line could convey movement and rhythm
  - movement in nature (cloud shapes)*
  - calligraphic styles (the Book of Kells)*
  - cartoon figures in action*
- make drawings based on themes reflecting broadening interests, experiences and feelings
  - pastimes, outings, special events*
- draw imaginative themes using inventive pattern and detail
  - stories, poems, songs*
  - dream cars, motorcycles or houses*
  - futuristic fashion*
  - characters in cartoon strips*
  - designing and sketching plans for a three-dimensional project*
- draw from observation
  - still life arrangements*
  - aspects of the environment when viewed from different angles, using a viewfinder (or a classroom window) to help position objects and define space*
  - the human figure (e.g. a classmate in a particular setting)*
  - details of the human figure (e.g. a portrait of a classmate).*

## Strand unit    Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and the work of artists

*describing what is happening in the drawing*

*the choice of materials and tools and the effects that were intended*

*how movement, rhythm and form are suggested*

*problems encountered and solutions found in interpreting the human figure*

*the use of overlapping and/or scale to suggest space in depth on a page*

*the most satisfying aspect of the drawing*

*other interpretations of the theme or how he/she would approach it*

*what he/she feels about the interpretation.*

### *Linkage*

Print: experimenting with overlapping, contrasting, side-by-side shapes

Clay: developing awareness of form through drawing

Construction: developing ability to use drawing to design a structure

These and other possible links between strands could be developed as mixed-media activities.

A mixed-media approach within strands is also possible.

### *Integration*

Music: interpreting (in line) sounds and sound pictures suggested by a variety of musical instruments; drawing musical instruments as still life, as portrait accessories

Dance: interpreting (in drawing) themes explored through movement

## Strand: Paint and colour

### Strand unit Painting

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- explore colour with a variety of colour drawing instruments, media and techniques  
*paint, crayons, oil and chalk pastels, chalks, inks, coloured pencils, felt-tipped and fibre-tipped pens*  
*print, applique, collage, tonal exercises in small-scale mosaic*
- make paintings based on recalled feelings and experiences and discover ways of achieving spatial effects  
*interpreting themes chosen for their colour possibilities that reflect broadening experiences and interests*  
*experimenting with colour and tone, with warm and cool colours, with overlapping, with basic aerial and linear perspective*
- express his/her imaginative life and interpret imaginative themes using colour expressively  
*stories and poems, including dramatic, atmospheric adventure stories*  
*classmates acting as models to capture the action*
- paint from observation  
*setting up and painting colour arrangements of his/her own choice*  
*aspects of the environment when viewed from different angles, using a viewfinder to help position objects or define space*  
*using colour and tone to create spatial effects*  
*the human figure or groups of figures in a particular setting*  
*playing in a band, fashion modelling*  
*a portrait of a classmate in tones of one colour*
- become sensitive to increasingly subtle colour differences and tonal variations in natural and manufactured objects  
*looking at and trying to reproduce the colour combinations of objects of visual interest*  
*using colour magazine cut-outs as an exercise in colour mixing*
- discover harmony and contrast in natural and manufactured objects and through themes chosen for their colour possibilities  
*mixing and juxtaposing colours to see how they react against each other*
- discover pattern and rhythm in natural and manufactured objects  
*using repetition and variation of complementary and harmonious colours and varieties of line, shape and texture*
- explore the relationship between how things feel and how they look  
*discovering texture in natural and manufactured objects*  
*interpreting textures in colour and tone and in mixed media.*

## Strand unit    Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and the work of artists

*describing what is happening in the painting*

*complementary or harmonious colours and tones, and subtle colour differences*

*how rhythm, movement, atmosphere, variety, space-in-depth or form is suggested*

*what he/she or the artist was trying to express*

*how other artists have interpreted the theme in similar or dissimilar ways*

*how he/she feels about the painting*

*using the internet or a CD-ROM to access the work of an artist and to answer questions as above.*

### *Linkage*

Drawing: interpreting qualities of line, shape, texture, light and shade

Construction: exploring the play of light and shade on structures

Fabric and fibre: developing colour awareness

### *Integration*

Music: interpreting (in paint and colour) stories, mood, concepts and occasions portrayed in sound

Drama: interpreting (in paint and colour) themes explored through drama

Science: Energy and forces—Light

# Strand: Print

## Strand unit Making prints

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- experiment with more complex print-making techniques
  - discovering how simple prints could be further developed*
    - overprinting with contrasting shapes or colours*
    - overlapping or placing shapes side by side*
    - masking out areas and taking a further print*
    - using an expanding colour range to create more complex images*
    - experimenting with a related technique to make photograms that concentrate on expressive shape, negative shape, outline*
- use more complex print-making techniques to make theme-based or non-representational prints
  - making a variety of relief prints*
    - composing relief print blocks with line, shape, texture, pattern*
    - re-interpreting his/her observational drawings and sketches in relief prints*
  - making monoprints, emphasising line, shape, texture*
    - combining with other print-making techniques*
  - making pictorial rubbings*
    - interpreting some of his/her drawings in terms of flat shape or silhouette together with some interesting textures*
  - making silk-screen prints*
    - re-interpreting some of his/her drawings as flat shape*
- make prints for functional uses (as well as for their own sake)
  - experimenting with fabric-printing techniques*
  - making posters*
  - designing and printing cards and logos*
- use a computer art program to create original images that are not dependent on clip art.

## Strand unit    Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at, handle and talk about natural and manufactured objects for experience of texture, shape and pattern
- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and art prints or print design that demonstrate a variety of print-making techniques

*describing the print*

*line, shape and negative shape, texture, pattern, colour and tone and the effect achieved*

*the decisions taken while working*

*the techniques used by the artist and speculating on why they were chosen*

*the most satisfactory elements or impact of the print.*

### *Linkage*

Drawing: experimenting with shape, texture, pattern, rhythm, structure

Paint and colour: developing colour awareness

### *Integration*

Mathematics: experimenting with 2-D shapes and properties to solve problems in design

## Strand: Clay

### Strand unit Developing form in clay

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- explore and discover the possibilities of clay as a medium for imaginative expression  
*experimenting with balance and proportion*
- use clay to analyse and interpret form from observation  
*modelling the human head or a sturdy human figure*
- explore some of the essential characteristics of three-dimensional work  
*developing understanding of structure through constructing and combining elements in clay*  
*how the positioning of weight stabilises a figure or structure (e.g. in making a set of book-ends)*
- make simple pottery and sculpture  
*designing, making and decorating pinch or coil-built pots*  
*designing imaginative pinch-pot sculptures (e.g. exotic animals or creatures)*
- experiment with and develop line, shape, texture and pattern in low relief  
*in non-representational or theme-based sculpture (e.g. rain dripping into a stream, the regatta)*
- make an imaginative slab-built structure  
*using multiple spaces for a more complex structure (e.g. a house with extensions)*
- work inventively and expressively with papier mâché  
*designing papier mâché masks, heads or models to illustrate stories, poems, songs and festivals.*

## Strand unit    Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at, handle and talk about natural and manufactured objects for experience of three-dimensional form  
*fruit, pottery, household items with interesting forms*
- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children and the work of sculptors, including relief sculptures (prints or slides)  
*describing the form*  
*the experience of working with materials*  
*analysing the relationships between the parts and the whole*  
*ways of combining elements in constructing and achieving balance*  
*what he/she or the artist was trying to express*  
*problems encountered and solved in interpreting the human head in clay*  
*pleasing aspects of the work*
- look at and talk about ritual masks, street theatre masks and figures, and functional and decorative pottery from different cultures and different times (slides or prints).

### *Linkage*

Drawing: developing awareness of form through drawing

Construction: analysing form and structure through construction

### *Integration*

Drama: interpreting (in clay or papier mâché) characters explored through drama

History: interpreting historical characters imaginatively in clay or papier mâché

# Strand: Construction

## Strand unit Making constructions

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- explore and experiment with the properties and characteristics of materials in making structures

*outlines and spaces created*

*how the different parts relate to the whole*

*the rhythms that are set up*

*whether the structure is delicately balanced or robust and solid*

*whether some areas of the structure are busier than others*

*exploring the possibilities of abstract free-standing paper sculpture*

*the play of light on the structure*

*the overall sense of balance created*

- make drawings from observation to analyse form and structure

*drawing structures seen in nature and exploring light and shade*

*investigating structure and balance in contemporary architecture and sculpture*

- make imaginative structures

*designing theme-based structures relating to local events and festivals*

*designing large-scale papier m<sup>â</sup>ch<sup>e</sup> forms and structures*

*monsters, dinosaurs, huge masks*

*designing non-representational structures in relief, concentrating on planes, shapes, rhythm, the play of light and shadow, texture*

*designing wire structures that emphasise line and are effective from all angles*

*designing a model with moving parts*

*using a suitable CAD program (where available) to design a structure.*

## Strand unit    Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at, investigate and talk about spatial arrangements, balance and outline in collections or photographs of natural and manufactured structures
  - large seed heads, containers (e.g. spiral sea shells)*
  - shopping centres, churches*
- look at and talk about his/her work and the work of other children
  - describing the construction*
  - how the materials chosen helped to fulfil or frustrate his/her intentions*
  - spaces, outlines, rhythms created*
  - what he/she feels about the construction*
- look at and talk about impressive examples of buildings created in the past in different parts of the world and at contemporary architecture, sculpture, engineering and design (slides or prints)
  - make a plan or model for an imaginative building.*

### *Linkage*

Drawing: analysing form and structure through drawing

Clay: using multiple spaces for complex structures

### *Integration*

Drama: interpreting (as large-scale papier mâché forms and structures) characters and symbols explored through drama

History: interpreting historical events imaginatively as large-scale papier mâché forms and structures

## Strand: Fabric and fibre

### Strand unit    Creating in fabric and fibre

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- explore and discover the possibilities of fabric and fibre as media for imaginative expression
  - experimenting with line, shape, colour, pattern, texture, with variously textured fibres and open-weave fabric*
  - textural effects with basic knitting and crochet stitches and woven-in items*
  - inventing stitches for decorative effect*
  - a simple batik experiment*
- make small inventive pieces in fabric and fibre
  - designing a collage or applique piece on an imaginative theme*
  - interpreting a natural object in line, shape, colour, pattern, texture through collage or applique*
  - developing the motif as a pattern, possibly as a repeat pattern to be used in fabric printing*
  - knitting or crocheting small individual pieces items for personal wear*
  - combining knitting or crochet with other elements to create pieces of jewellery*
  - weaving a wall-hanging using the natural environment as a source of visual inspiration*
- make simple character toys
  - making inventive use of old clothes and pieces of fabric to make toys based on stories, poems, drama*
- design and make a costume
  - an inventive and distinctive costume as a variation on a theme for members of a band*
  - using a computer art program to create and modify a costume design.*

## Strand unit    Looking and responding

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- look at, handle and talk about a variety of fabrics and fibres for experience of tactile, visual and spatial qualities
  - soft, fluffy, coarse, smooth, stiff, warm, cool, finely or thickly woven or structured, textured*
  - colour and pattern*
  - covering, folding and draping qualities*
  - the work of artists who have used these fabrics*
- look at and talk about his/her work and the work of other children
  - describing the piece of work*
  - how the materials chosen may have suggested ways of interpreting an idea*
  - how different textures, colours and patterns combine*
  - how challenges in construction and design were or could be overcome*
  - what is pleasing about the work*
- look at and talk about woven, embroidered, knitted and other fabrics, including interesting items of clothing from different times and cultures, and explore the role of textiles in culture
- look at fabric crafts and artefacts and visit a craftsperson at work if possible.

### *Linkage*

Drawing: interpreting line, shape, texture, light and shade in drawings

Construction: using fabric and fibre in a sculptural construction

### *Integration*

Drama: inventing a costume for a character explored through drama

Science: Materials—Properties and characteristics of materials; Designing and making

# Assessment



# Assessment

## Assessment: an integral part of teaching and learning

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning in visual arts education. It contributes to a teaching-learning-assessing continuum that provides the teacher with valuable information on the child's development in art and on the effectiveness of the teaching programme.

Assessment in the visual arts takes place as the child engages in the creative process of making art, when a piece of art work is completed and while making a personal response to art works. This approach to assessment enables the teacher to ensure that the whole spectrum of visual arts education is reflected in the child's learning and in his/her teaching.

Assessment helps to ensure that the programme is appropriate to the needs of the individual child. It helps to identify learning potential and problems and enables the teacher to choose appropriate teaching strategies. It also provides the teacher with a sound basis for recording and reporting on the child's development in art.

Although much of what can be achieved in visual arts education is observable, assessment should not be confined to skills and techniques. It should also identify the understandings, the attitudes and levels of commitment and the responses the child develops in the process of making art and of developing critical and aesthetic awareness.

## Roles of assessment: why assess?

Assessment can serve different purposes. Continuous assessment that takes place during the course of visual arts activities gives the teacher information on the child's level of involvement, on his/her stage and rate of development and on immediate learning needs. This *formative* type of assessment helps the teacher to plan the next step in the child's learning and may suggest modifications to aspects of the visual arts programme. Problems may be diagnosed in visual expression, but this should be seen as one indicator of the child's whole development and should be combined with other indicators for a complete assessment.

Assessment is *summative* when used to give a periodic overview of the child's development in the visual arts. This form of assessment can be useful to the child, to parents, to teachers and to other professionals.

The visual arts programme should be reviewed regularly to check that it meets the developmental needs of the individual child and to enable the teacher to plan accordingly. *Evaluative* assessment can identify effective approaches to teaching and the use of resources and can facilitate the maintenance of a broad and balanced developmental curriculum.

### Assessment in the visual arts: what should be assessed?

The visual arts curriculum is designed to enable the child to make art and to understand and respond to art works through the content and structure of the strands and strand units. Assessment should be based on a range of visual arts activities that have been completed over a period of time, including those learning experiences that involve integration with other subjects.

It should be concerned with

- the child's ability to make art
- the child's ability to look with understanding at and respond to art works
- the quality of the child's engagement with art.

All three are interrelated and are assessed on the basis of

- perceptual awareness
- expressive abilities and skills
- critical and aesthetic awareness
- disposition towards art activities.

#### *Assessing perceptual awareness*

This is concerned with the child's ability to

- explore and analyse the elements of line, shape, form, colour and tone, texture, pattern and rhythm and spatial organisation, and how they combine in the natural and built environments
- express understanding of these elements visually and in discussion.

Perceptual awareness could be observed, for example, in the child's ability to notice shape, texture and contours and how they combine in an attractive shell or perhaps in a piece of sculpture.

*Assessing expressive abilities and skills*

This is concerned with the child's ability to

- express with originality, ideas, feelings and experiences through a range of visual arts media
- make skilled and imaginative use of materials and tools appropriate to his/her stage of development
- respond to a stimulus, develop an idea and make changes to the way he/she wants to express it visually.

These expressive abilities and skills would be observed in the quality of line, shape, colour, texture or pattern achieved in a particular task and in the child's commitment and level of personal involvement in achieving these qualities.

*Assessing critical and aesthetic awareness*

This is concerned with the child's ability to

- view art works with openness and increasing sensitivity
- be curious, to question what he/she sees and to value the judgements of others
- recognise categories of art works and to use his/her discriminatory powers in making judgements about them
- understand and respond to the visual ideas (for example ideas about beauty, friendship, and power) expressed in art works
- be affected by art works.

While acknowledging that the most significant response to an art work is internal, the teacher needs to know how the child responds to an art work and if and how it influences his/her work. Subsequent changes in the child's own work that are not mere copying could possibly be interpreted as the result of that response.

*Assessing disposition towards art activities*

This is concerned with the child's ability to

- take a positive approach to and become personally involved in the creative process
- take risks in making and responding to art works so that his/her work is always personal and inventive.

The development of capability and adaptability is an important aspect of the child's development in art and is influenced by his/her disposition or attitude towards art activities.

These aspects of development in art are interrelated, and assessment should comprise a balance of all four.

### Assessment tools: how to assess

A range of assessment tools would be necessary to fulfil the roles of assessment as outlined above. Some combination of the following would be appropriate for assessment in the visual arts:

*teacher observation*

*teacher-designed tasks*

*work samples, portfolios and projects*

*curriculum profiles.*

#### *Teacher observation*

This is the form of assessment most commonly used by the teacher. It involves constant reflection on and reappraisal of teaching practices. The teacher assesses the child's progress as he/she observes, questions and monitors the child's ability to develop concepts and skills, to handle materials and tools, and to make a personal response to the visual environment and to art works. This informal mode of assessment would focus on

- the child's ability to respond in a variety of ways to visual arts tasks
- the child's developing perceptual awareness (for example the extent to which he/she can evaluate objectively, his/her own work and the work of others)
- the child's commitment and level of personal involvement with the task in hand.

#### *Teacher-designed tasks*

This form of assessment is more structured than teacher observation. It would involve planning an art activity designed specifically to indicate the child's ability to handle particular concepts and skills. It would include setting tasks to which the child would have to find solutions in different media. The task might be theme-based, such as an

interpretation of an aspect of the natural world (for example hairy animals, colourful fish) or of an urban environment (for example the playground, a shopping centre), and the child would, if circumstances allow, choose the medium through which he/she would interpret the theme. As well as providing an opportunity to assess the child's ability to work independently, it would enable the teacher to observe the child in the social activity of art and to see how individual groups co-operate. The value of the group endeavour, both in the process of arriving at solutions to the task and in the final product, would also be a focus for assessment.

The aspects of development to be assessed and the level of achievement to be expected would be appropriate to the child's stage of development in art and would include the child's ability to

- communicate concerns and experiences in a personal way, through a variety of visual arts media
- work co-operatively, productively and enjoyably with others.

#### *Work samples, portfolios and projects*

A portfolio would comprise a representative sample of the child's work and would be updated periodically. Work samples could include work in progress as well as completed work so as to record the range and depth of the child's achievement in art during that time. For example, as well as samples of drawings, paintings and prints, the portfolio could also contain photographic or electronic records of achievements in three-dimensional work and of theme-based work carried out in a variety of media. The child's own record of his/her progress should also be included, as well as that of the teacher.

The collaborative nature of project work can help to develop self-esteem and can indicate abilities and dispositions that might otherwise remain unnoticed. Project work could include:

- planning and creating a wall frieze using a variety of media
- creating a series of theme-based woven wall-hangings
- building a structure for a set of clay figures designed to interpret a moment in a fictional or historical story
- creating a large-scale papier mâché model for a festival or other occasion.

Criteria for assessment would be employed as in teacher observation and teacher-designed tasks. The portfolio could be reviewed with the child to encourage self-assessment and to help clarify objectives. A sense of ownership would be encouraged by involving the child in the selection of work samples and by encouraging him/her to keep a personal record of progress. This form of assessment provides an accessible overview of progress in art for the teacher, for the child and for parents. There should be an agreed understanding among staff members about its purpose and how best to manage it.

### *Curriculum profiles*

The teacher's continuous observation of the child's development in art could be structured more formally as a curriculum profile. This profile would comprise short descriptive statements about the child's achievement in art. Levels of achievement would be linked to curricular objectives and would be measured against a set of indicators scaled in order of complexity. Evaluation would be based on teacher observation of the child at work, on information gleaned from teacher-designed tasks and from work samples, portfolios and projects. This form of assessment would provide information for the teacher and for parents on the child's achievement and learning needs. It would also be of use in planning a programme to meet those needs.

### A balanced approach to assessment

The primary aim of assessment in the visual arts is to enhance the child's learning, and it should therefore not impinge significantly on teaching and learning time. School policy should indicate a manageable approach to assessment and should ensure that staff members can, through discussion, arrive at a balanced form of assessment that is valid and reliable, is commonly understood and is uniform throughout the school.

### Recording and communicating

The range of assessment tools used will collectively provide a comprehensive system of assessing and recording each child's development in art. A common understanding of pupil progress and of criteria for assessment may be reached through discussion and the sharing of expertise among staff members. Information on the child's progress will be shared with parents, teachers and other professionals and will be invaluable in planning his/her future learning needs.

*Pupil profile card*

A pupil profile card would contain a comprehensive profile of the child's progress. Development in all strands of the visual arts curriculum would form one aspect of his/her progress and would be recorded from information gleaned by the teacher from the various forms of assessment.

Information technology offers possibilities for recording, storing and transferring pupil profile cards in a manageable way.



# Appendix



# Glossary

aerial perspective	the device of using fading colour and tone to create an illusion of space in a painting
aesthetic awareness	the ability to look with understanding at art works and make a personal response to them
appliqu	a picture or pattern created by stitching pieces of fabric to a fabric background
batik	a colour design or composition created by waxing sections of a piece of cloth before dyeing, so that the waxed sections remain uncoloured
coil and pellet design	small coiled and rolled or carved clay motifs that have been attached to a clay surface in a decorative design
coil pot	a pot made by laying rolls of clay on top of one another and building them up to create a hollow form
collage	an image or design created by sticking materials such as paper, card, fabric, printed material and string to a base
complementary colours	colours that intensify each other and are opposite each other on the colour wheel, for example red and green
cool colours	the blues, blue-greys and blue-greens, which appear to recede in a painting
crayon transfer	achieved by covering a sheet of paper in wax crayon of various colours and drawing on a second sheet placed on top so that some of the crayon prints out as a coloured drawing on the underside of the upper sheet
found objects	everyday objects that can be used, for example in a collage or to create stamps for print-making
harmonious colours	colours that blend well together and are close to each other on the colour wheel
hue	the basic characteristic of a pure colour, for example red, green
imagery	the marks, lines, shapes, figures and objects that make up a composition

linear perspective	the illusion that parallel lines meet at a point on the horizon, for example railway lines, used in drawings and paintings to give the illusion of depth
lithography	a method of printing that depends on the mutually repellent actions of grease and water
low relief	a type of sculpture in which the forms are not free-standing but are attached to a background (as on a coin)
mask-out	a technique in printing for protecting an area of the design from colour when inking up
media	materials and tools used by artists
monoprint	a once-off print taken when, for example, a clean page is pressed down on a surface that has been covered with printing ink or paint and then drawn on
mosaic	a design or tonal effect created by arranging very small pieces of coloured marble, stone or glass on a background; in school, pieces of coloured fabric on paper may be used
non-representational art	art that makes no reference to actual things seen
outline drawing	an image created in line only, without solid areas of tone or colour
overlapping	placing one shape in front of another to give a three-dimensional effect in a composition
pattern	created by the repetition of discernible shapes, colours and/or textures in a composition
photogram	a type of print achieved when objects that have been arranged on light-sensitive paper are exposed to light in a dark room
pinch-pot	a pot made by hollowing out a kneaded ball of clay with the fingers and building it up by pinching out the sides
primary colours	the three basic colours (red, yellow and blue) that cannot be mixed from other colours but can be used to mix all the other hues
relief printing	printing from a block whose design or image stands out in relief

rhythm	the flow, with variation, of lines, shapes, colours and/or textures in a composition
schema	the marks, lines and shapes (i.e. set of symbols) that are the child's interpretation of familiar figures and objects, for example using a circle for a body with stick-like limbs or a circle and two parallel lines for a tree
screen-printing	a technique for printing a flat image through a fine mesh that has been stretched over a frame
silhouette	an image presented as flat shape in a drawing or painting
slab building	working with slabs of clay that have been rolled out or cut from a large lump with cutting wire
soft sculpture	three-dimensional forms made from flexible materials such as fabric
stabile	a sculptural construction in space that is fixed to a base (in contrast to a mobile, which hangs)
stencil	a cut-out shape or motif in paper or card that is placed on a surface and sponged, sprayed or brushed with paint to reproduce the shape or motif
symbol	a simplified drawing that stands for a figure or object (see schema)
texture	how a surface feels to touch, or its representation in a medium such as paint
tone	the lightness or darkness of a colour
vernacular architecture	the building style that is typical of an area or region, and of a particular time
warm colours	the reds, oranges and yellows, which appear to advance in a composition
wax-resist	drawing with wax crayon or candle on a page so that the drawn areas will resist a subsequent colour wash
whirler	a small circular rotating stand

# Membership of the Curriculum Committee for Arts Education

This curriculum has been prepared by the Curriculum Committee for Arts Education established by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

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ISBN 0-7076-6306-7



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